



Exercise 1

Look at the sentences below. Which three idioms have the same meaning? Which idiom has the opposite meaning to these three?

1. Everyone around the table remained silent and I tried to think of a way of **breaking the ice**.
2. It's strange that her two ex-husbands **get on like a house on fire**!
3. Oh yes, we **go back a long way** – we went to nursery school together.
4. I'm afraid we got **off on the wrong foot** because I got her name wrong.
5. They are definitely **on the same wavelength** – both passionate about green politics.
6. We didn't really **hit it off** – we just aren't interested in the same things.

Exercise 2

Match sentence halves 1–8 with A–H to make complete sentences.

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| 1. Whenever his mother was in the room, | A. definitely on the rocks. |
| 2. It's his stupid loud voice | B. I was aware of sparks flying. |
| 3. Their business partnership was now | C. treated them like dirt. |
| 4. She took his keys and his coat | D. our own flesh and blood. |
| 5. They left because the manager | E. and left him in the lurch. |
| 6. He was rude to her so she's decided that in future | F. that gets on my nerves. |
| 7. We care about you because you are | G. to help them save face. |
| 8. We pretended not to notice them leave, | H. she'll give him the cold shoulder. |

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Exercise 3

Choose the best answer to complete the sentences.

1. You have started _____ by arriving late for our appointment.
a) to save face b) on the same wavelength c) off on the wrong foot
2. He's highly educated and she's got no qualifications at all, but they managed to _____.
a) get off on the wrong foot b) hit it off c) go back a long way
3. Mr. Sen invited them all to dinner at his house to _____.
a) get off on the wrong foot b) got on like a house on fire c) break the ice
4. As soon as the prisoners arrive, the guards begin to _____.
a) treat them like dirt b) get off on the wrong foot c) leave them in the lurch
5. Luca's personal assistant quit suddenly and _____ so I'm doing some typing for him.
a) left him in the lurch b) treated him like dirt c) got the cold shoulder
6. They argue all the time now. There's no doubt that their marriage is _____.
a) on fire b) on the rocks c) their own flesh and blood

Exercise 4

Correct the idioms in these sentences.

1. When I saw her at the part, she just **gave me the cold hands**.
2. We used to argue a lot, but now we're getting on like a house **in the lurch**.
3. We go back **on the rocks**. We met when we were just children.
4. As soon as they met, they **hit it on**.

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5. I find him a bit irritating. He really **gets on my sparks**.
6. We understand each other well. We're **on the same foot**.

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Exercise 5

Replace the underlined words with idioms from this unit in the correct form.

1. We get on well, but we have different views on politics. As soon as we start talking about politics, we have an argument – so we tend to avoid the subject.
2. Don't worry – I promised I would help you, and I won't abandon you.
3. Unfortunately, when we first met, we had a disagreement which ruined our relationship. But I'm sure that next time we meet, we can become friends.
4. I tried to say something funny just to ease the tension – but I don't think she found it very amusing.

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The Answer

Exercise 1

The three idioms that have the same meaning are:

- B. get on like a house on fire
- E. on the same wavelength
- F. hit it off

The idiom that has the opposite meaning to these three is:

- D. got off on the wrong foot

Exercise 2

- 1. B
- 2. F
- 3. A
- 4. E
- 5. C
- 6. H
- 7. D
- 8. G

Exercise 3

- 1. c
- 2. b
- 3. c
- 4. a
- 5. a
- 6. b

Exercise 4

- 1. gave me the cold shoulder
- 2. getting on like a house on fire
- 3. go back a long way
- 4. hit it off
- 5. gets on my nerves
- 6. on the same wavelength

Exercise 5

- 1. sparks fly
- 2. leave you in the lurch
- 3. got off on the wrong foot
- 4. break the ice